

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SSB 5229

As Passed House:

April 13, 2009

Title: An act relating to the legislative youth advisory council.

Brief Description: Regarding the legislative youth advisory council.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Early Learning & K-12 Education (originally sponsored by Senators McAuliffe, Hobbs, Franklin, Tom, King, Pridemore, Kohl-Welles, Jacobsen, Kilmer and Shin).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

State Government & Tribal Affairs: 3/24/09, 3/26/09 [DP];
Education Appropriations: 4/1/09 [DPA].

Floor Activity

Passed House: 4/13/09, 92-6.

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Allows the Legislative Youth Advisory Council (Council) to solicit grants and donations from private sources.
- Removes the Council's expiration date.
- Directs that lodging and mileage are reimbursed and program administration is provided only if sufficient funds are available.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON STATE GOVERNMENT & TRIBAL AFFAIRS

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 7 members: Representatives Hunt, Chair; Appleton, Vice Chair; Armstrong, Ranking Minority Member; Alexander, Flannigan, Hurst and Miloscia.

Staff: Marsha Reilly (786-7135)

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION APPROPRIATIONS

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Majority Report: Do pass as amended. Signed by 13 members: Representatives Haigh, Chair; Sullivan, Vice Chair; Priest, Ranking Minority Member; Anderson, Carlyle, Cox, Haler, Hunter, Kagi, Probst, Quall, Rolfes and Wallace.

Staff: Ben Rarick (786-7349)

Background:

In 2005 the Legislative Youth Advisory Council (Council) was established to provide an opportunity for students to be actively involved in government. The Council consists of 22 students between the ages of 14 and 18. Originally, the Council was to expire after two years.

The program is administered by the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI). Duties of the Council consist of advising the Legislature on legislation, policy, and budget matters relating to youth; advising standing committees, commissions, and task forces on issues related to youth; conducting periodic seminars for its members on leadership, government, and the Legislature; and submitting annual reports to the Legislature with any recommendations for legislation. The Council meets between three and six times a year.

In the 2007 session, the process for determining members of the Council was changed from a selection process by legislators and the Governor to an application process. Interested students may apply by completing an online application and submitting it to the Council. The Council recommends applicants to the Office of the Lieutenant Governor for final selection, and the Lieutenant Governor notifies all the applicants of the final selections. The expiration date for the Council was extended for two additional years, until June 30, 2009.

Currently the Council may accept grants and donations from public and private sources to support the Council's activities. In the 2007-09 operating budget, \$228,000 was provided to the OSPI for the operation of the Council.

Summary of Bill:

The Council is authorized to solicit, not merely accept, grants and donations from public and private sources to support its activities. The OSPI administration of the program and the Lieutenant Governor's selection process of the Council members must be done within existing staff and resources. The duties of the Council, including meetings and travel reimbursement, is contingent on sufficient funds being available from any source. The expiration date of June 30, 2009, is removed.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date of Amended Bill: The bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect immediately.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony (State Government & Tribal Affairs):

(In support) The Council provides a great opportunity for young people to take an active role in the legislative process. Because of the budget situation, the Council should be allowed to solicit funds to support their activities. The creation of the Council came about through a student proposal in 2005. In the first two years, there was no financial support from the Legislature. In 2007 the expiration date for the Council was renewed, and funding was provided which allowed for administrative assistance and travel. The current bill eliminates the expiration date and allows the Council to solicit funds. The Council has identified five issues this year important to youth: removal of the expiration date, environmental concerns, student dropouts, drug penalties, and youth voting. The Council is necessary and worthwhile and is the official voice of youth. The issues of concern were identified through surveys.

(Opposed) None.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony (Education Appropriations):

(In support) The \$72,000 referenced in the fiscal note is for salary and benefits for a part-time staff person for program administration and for transportation costs for meetings. The Council may not currently accept grants and this legislation will allow for solicitation of grants. The intent is to allow the Council to exist, no matter where the funding comes from. Depending on how much funding is raised, the OSPI will administer the program. The Council does not expect an appropriation.

(With concerns) The OSPI supports continuation of the Council. The program has provided a good experience for the members of the Council and also has added value to the legislative process. The OSPI would like an amendment to clarify that it would provide assistance only if sufficient funding is available.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying (State Government & Tribal Affairs): Senator McAuliffe, prime sponsor; and Ehrik Aldana, Jena Graham, and Tucker Cholvin, Legislative Youth Advisory Council.

Persons Testifying (Education Appropriations): (In support) Alex Jordin and Phil Gardner, Legislative Youth Advisory Council.

(With concerns) Bob Butts, Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying (State Government & Tribal Affairs): None.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying (Education Appropriations): None.